

VZCZCXRO6888
PP RUEHDE RUEHDIR
DE RUEHKU #0305 0771400
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 171400Z MAR 08
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1012
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 1098
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 3109
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 000305

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [KPAL](#) [KU](#)
SUBJECT: AMIR OF KUWAIT TO ATTEND DAMASCUS AL SUMMIT

Classified By: CDA Misenheimer for reasons 1.4 b and d

¶1. (C) In a March 17 meeting at Seif Palace, Amiri Diwan Minister Sh. Nasser Sabah al-Ahmed Al Sabah told CDA that the Amir of Kuwait will/will attend the Damascus Arab League summit. The Minister acknowledged CDA's arguments against attendance, but concluded that the Amir had considered carefully and decided to go.

¶2. (C) Sh. Nasser explained that Syria's decision to invite Lebanon, along with Saudi Arabia's consequent decision to ease its opposition to the summit, had "changed the atmosphere" among the Arab heads of state. Stressing that Kuwait and the United States are in "complete agreement" on aims in Lebanon, he noted that Kuwait and other AL members had a wider range of tactics available: "you have only sticks, but we also have carrots." Sh. Nasser argued that the "carrot" of summit attendance would afford Bashar and the SARG the opportunity to give something positive in return, specifically on Lebanon. He declined to speculate on what that "something" might be, but added that if Bashar fails to take some positive step in response to the "relatively high" attendance now expected at the summit, he will "find Arab doors closed to him in future."

¶3. (C) Sh. Nasser said he expected that President Mubarak and Jordan's King Abdullah would not/not attend per media reporting. King Abdullah of KSA also will not attend, he said, but declined to predict whether FM Saud al-Faisal or someone else would represent the SAG in Damascus. Regarding the GCC, Nasser would say only that all the members are assessing and reassessing, and that he expected "several" GCC heads of state to make the trip to Damascus.

¶4. (C) Comment: Characteristically, the GOK has taken its decision with Saudi policy clearly in view. When the Saudis were openly opposing the summit, the Kuwaitis supported postponement. Now that the Saudis have relaxed their stance, Kuwaiti policy has shifted accordingly.

For more reporting from Embassy Kuwait, visit:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/kuwait/?cable s>

Visit Kuwait's Classified Website:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/kuwait/>

Misenheimer